

However, in the same letter, the NPS also stated that in its discussion with the Governor, the Governor said that he did not intend for there to be any further commercial development of Utulei Park other than the proposed McDonalds.

On the one hand, the Governor says he needs to construct a McDonalds at Utulei Beach because this is critical to the overall redevelopment plans for the Utulei and Fagatogo area and, on the other hand, he says that the McDonalds corporation will be the only corporation allowed to build at Utulei Beach. How fair is this to Kentucky Fried Chicken, Pizza Hut, and the rest of our local business owners? Faleomavaega asked.

Do our business owners have a say in this? What about our Fono? Has the Governor submitted an economic development plan to our Legislature for consideration? If not, why not? Also, what is the role of the Fono in determining what lands the Governor may offer up as replacement lands for Utulei Beach?

Whatever direction this takes, I believe the NPS has an obligation to keep the public informed and I will do my part to make sure this is so. For now, I am pleased that the NPS has agreed to provide an initial review of proposed replacement properties that would indicate if there are any obvious facts that would render them ineligible before funds are expended to obtain surveys, appraisals, recreational development plans, and environmental compliance. Most importantly, I am pleased that the NPS has underscored the importance of the Governors commitment to prohibiting any ground disturbing activity related to the McDonalds lease until NPS has completed the review and approval process for replacement properties.

Again, I thank the NPS for providing clarification on its recent meeting with the Governor and I am encouraged that the NPS is taking this matter very seriously. I am also encouraged that the NPS has documented its meeting with the Governor in its July 6th letter so that all facts pertaining to this historic issue can be made part of the public record. Utulei Beach is the peoples beach and, as such, our people have every right to know how ASG officials make decisions that will impact, for generations to come, the use of the most scenic and only beach park in American Samoa.

Our people also have every right to know what local lands will be given away to the federal government to accommodate the needs of one business owner. For this reason, a full copy of the NPS letter dated July 6, 2006 is posted on my website, Faleomavaega concluded.

[Press Release, May 19, 2006]

HOUSE PASSES INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS BILL WITH OVER \$33 MILLION FOR AMERICAN SAMOA; URGES ACCOUNTABILITY OF FEDERAL FUNDS AND DISCOURAGES COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF UTULEI BEACH

Congressman Faleomavaega announced today that late last night the House Committee on Interior Appropriations passed by a vote of 293 to 128 H.R. 5386, the FY 2007 Interior Appropriations bill which includes over \$33 million for the operations of the American Samoa Government and Capital Improvement Projects (CIPS). The bill also includes language which urges greater accountability of ASG funds and discourages the commercial development of Utulei Beach Park.

As I said in my release of May 16th, ASG continues to be the only government that receives a direct appropriation from Congress for the operations of its government despite being designated as high risk, the Congressman said. As a result of this support, I am hopeful that our local government will provide better accountability and I commend ASG for the progress it is making.

At this time, I thank the House Committee on Interior Appropriations for including my request to set aside \$500,000 of the \$22,880,000 ASG will receive for government operations. As stated in the Committee report, The Committee expects the government of American Samoa will use no less than \$500,000 of this funding for physical education activities at school. I am pleased by this outcome since our public schools lack adequate facilities, equipment and personnel to provide quality health and education programs which are critical to the physical, mental, and social development of our students. As a result of this funding, I am hopeful that our local DOE will have the support it needs to purchase equipment and establish sports programs for the benefit of our children.

I am also hopeful that our local leaders will work quickly to resolve the McDonalds issue that has now drawn Congressional attention. Again, I like McDonalds and I applaud the many valuable contributions McDonalds has made in American Samoa. I also support construction of a new McDonalds anywhere in American Samoa but Utulei Beach.

The fact is Utulei Beach is a federally protected park area and, by contractual agreement, cannot be used for any commercial purpose. Therefore, the current proposal to construct a McDonalds within a federally protected park area is a potential violation of ASGs agreement with the US National Park Service (NPS) and, as such, is an issue that has escalated into a federal problem that must be expeditiously resolved.

In other words, the current debate about McDonalds is a debate about location. If McDonalds builds on land solely-controlled by ASG, then its a local issue. But if McDonalds seeks to build on land that has been protected as a federal park area, then its a federal issue and this is why Congress has taken an interest.

Put another way, ASG, by choice, entered into an agreement with the NPS to protect Utulei Beach and now Congress has spoken out in the FY 2007 Interior Appropriations bill to encourage the American Samoa government to not allow commercial development of waterfront areas of Utulei Beach Park because this site has such high recreational and natural values, and it has enjoyed funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program which indicates that this park land should be dedicated to public outdoor recreational use in perpetuity.

While it is unfortunate that construction of a new McDonalds in our Territory has received Congressional attention and while it is worrisome that the US Congress has taken notice that ASG received federal funds to preserve Utulei Beach but is not being accountable for those funds, I believe it is in the best interest of our Territory to resolve this matter quickly so that other federal funding we receive will not be jeopardized.

As I said in a previous release, American Samoa, on a per capita basis, receives more federal education funding per pupil than any other State or Territory. Our health care funding has also doubled and recently we were able to significantly increase our Medicaid funding. With the amount of support and funding we are receiving, I am convinced if there is better accountability of federal funds we will see significant improvements in this Territory.

Again, I thank my colleagues for their support and, as this bill now moves to the Senate for consideration, I will continue to work to make sure American Samoa receives its fair share of federal dollars, Congressman Faleomavaega concluded.

HONORING WILLIAM L. GIVENS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 20, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize William L. Givens. William is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1261, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

William has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years William has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, William has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in commending William L. Givens for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING DJOUNEDOU TITIKPINA

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 20, 2014

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and admiration that I stand before you today to honor Mr. Djounedou Titikpina for his many years of selfless and compassionate public service.

Djounedou Titikpina originally hails from the nation of Togo, but brought his passion for public service and community building with him to the United States. This passion is clearest in Mr. Titikpina's founding of the African People Alliance, Incorporated. This organization, which serves as an umbrella organization for other groups working to develop the African community here in The Bronx, has the unique dual role of providing social services while also working to fortify the work of existing groups throughout the community. The African People Alliance routinely hosts cultural exhibitions, youth and adult soccer programs, and legal assistance to individuals, while providing groups with infrastructural support and development they need to grow. Additionally, the African People Alliance plays a lead role in the annual coordination of the Bronx African United Day Parade and Festival.

Today, he serves as Founder and CEO of Djounedou T.'s African Fashion & Embroidery Design, Corporation, is a member of the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition's Immigrant Rights Campaign Board of Directors, and provides services as a family court interpreter at Geneva Worldwide, Incorporated. With the ability to speak more than nine languages, Mr. Titikpina's talent to communicate and understand the needs of the community, and respond to them in meaningful ways comes as no surprise.

Mr. Titikpina is an individual who is clearly committed to ensuring that our community's work in tandem to grow in healthy, respectable ways. He has fostered partnerships among groups and individuals that are all working towards a common goal, and this type of leadership is what keeps our community moving in

the right direction each day. I am grateful to know that someone like Djounedou Titikpina is working in with and for our residents each day, and am proud to call him a fellow public servant.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Djounedou Titikpina for his consistently remarkable dedication to public service.

NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH AND NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 20, 2014

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, this November, I am proud to celebrate National Adoption Month and also National Adoption Day, an important time to recognize those wonderful parents who have adopted children in need of a permanent, loving home. It's also a time to remind ourselves of the thousands of children across the country who still remain in foster care, waiting for a family to call their own.

Earlier this year, I was honored to recognize Midland County Probate Judge Dorene Allen as the 2014 Angel in Adoption award recipient from my district. In her 14 years as a judge, she has finalized nearly 700 adoptions, and through this and her prior work she has dedicated her career to serving Michigan's most vulnerable children. There are many incredible advocates like Judge Allen around the country, and I am grateful for their efforts and for the opportunity we have to recognize them today.

Adoption is not something I'm speaking about just today, but something I have focused on throughout my career in private practice as well as my years in Congress. As an attorney before coming to Congress, I worked with parents and children in the foster care system. In Congress, I have been privileged to meet many adoption advocates as well as youth who have benefitted from adoption. Those sorts of experiences provided much of the background for legislation I have helped craft that has contributed to the landmark changes in adoption policy Congress has approved in recent years.

In 1997, my colleagues and I on the Ways and Means Committee crafted the Adoption and Safe Families Act. That legislation streamlined the adoption process to help more children in foster care quickly move into permanent adoptive homes. It also, for the first time, offered incentives to states to safely increase the number of children adopted from foster care.

It worked. In the decade following that legislation, the number of U.S. children adopted from foster care increased by 71 percent. In the years since, adoptions have continued to remain higher even as the foster care caseload started to decline. Overall, almost 300,000 children have been adopted as a result of the increase in adoptions starting in 1997. One study estimated the federal government saved \$1 billion over eight years by ensuring children were adopted instead of remaining in foster care.

In 2001, I worked with my colleagues to pass the historic 2001 tax relief package that expanded the adoption tax credit to \$10,000,

easing the financial burden of adopting a child. In 2012, we made the adoption tax credit permanent.

In 2003, President George W. Bush signed into law my legislation, the Adoption Promotion Act, to create new financial incentives for states that increase adoptions of older children from foster care.

In 2008 as part of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act, my proposal to provide equitable access to foster care and adoption services for Indian children in tribal areas became law. This allowed tribal governments to receive funding to administer adoption and foster care programs directly.

And just this year—after many months of hearings, public comment, and bipartisan work between the House and Senate—the President signed into law the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act. This law is designed to reduce child sex trafficking as well as increase adoptions, including among the hardest-to-place children.

Together, these efforts have resulted in more children living in loving, adoptive families. I am grateful for the support I have received from my colleagues in these efforts during my time in Congress, and I am grateful that today we can recognize and honor the most important people in this process—the parents who adopt children, the children who have been adopted, and those children still searching for a loving family.

Children in foster care deserve a place to call home, not for a few months or years, but for good. We have already seen great progress in increasing adoptions in recent years, and I hope that we will continue to see progress in the years ahead.

HONORING COLONEL ROY PLUMMER

HON. LYNN A. WESTMORELAND

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 20, 2014

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor one of Columbus, Georgia's finest leaders: Colonel Roy Plummer. Colonel Roy Plummer is retiring as a Director of Army Instruction for the Muscogee County School District JROTC where he is responsible for eight high school JROTC programs and four other county JROTC programs. From 1998 to the present he has dedicated his efforts toward creating a formidable district-level JROTC program which has grown from 400 cadets early in his tenure to a current operating enrollment of 1200 cadets. His partnership with the high school principals in moving JROTC forward in terms of relevancy and as an enhancer to each high school's vision has been extremely successful. Under Colonel Plummer's mentorship, the Muscogee County School District JROTC has earned GHSA State Rifle Championships, State-level awards in drill team and raider competitions, and honorable recognition in the annual JROTC Academic Bowl.

Colonel Plummer is the Senior Pastor, Founder and CEO of Faith Tabernacle Community Church in Columbus since its inception in October 1994. He had finished his Active Duty Army career as the Chief of Chaplains of

Fort Benning, Georgia prior to his retirement. He also currently serves as the Chaplain for Rotary International District 6900, Columbus, Georgia. He has served on numerous Boards as both a chairman and as a member: St. Francis Hospital Foundation, Columbus Hospice, United Way, Boy Scouts of America and the Columbus Chamber of Commerce are but a few.

Colonel Plummer served as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Counseling Graduate Studies at Columbus State University. He has earned a baccalaureate in Biblical Literature, Masters of Arts in Human Relations & Group Process and Guidance & Counseling, a Masters of Divinity in Pastoral Care, and a Doctorate in Divinity. This solid educational background and his benevolence inspired Colonel Plummer to create the Plummer Home for homeless and disenfranchised military veterans.

A native of May Penn, Clarendon Parrish, Jamaica, Colonel Roy Plummer is a leader, pastor and friend to many; and the father to four daughters and seven grandchildren. He will share with you that "The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" To Roy Plummer and the endless contributions he has made to JROTC, the Muscogee County School District, and the Columbus community, we say "Thanks a Million!"

HONORING GEORGE ALLEN ORTIZ

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 20, 2014

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Albuquerque resident George Allen Ortiz for his honorable military service in the United States Marine Corps.

George Allen Ortiz, affectionately known as "Al", was born in the northern New Mexico town of Raton. At the ripe age of 17, Al began his service in the Vietnam War. He would honorably serve his country from February 28, 1964 to February 16, 1970 in the First Marine Division at battles that ensued in the South Vietnam city of Da Nang.

I had the pleasure of personally meeting with Al on Veteran's Day to thank him for his dedicated service to the United States of America. In that wonderful moment I could sense Al's burning pride and fervent patriotism. It reminded me of the countless individuals, throughout history, who fought tirelessly to preserve the guiding principles and enduring freedoms of our country. Al's commitment to the preservation of these pursuits and our country's continued success is unwavering.

Al was recently diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, a result of the risks that American soldiers face when they step onto the battlefield. He has the wonderful support of Cathy, his wife of 45 years, daughter Tamra and six grandchildren who love him dearly. Like a true soldier, he is always thinking about the young Americans who are currently making sacrifices to defend the United States. At age 65, Al still talks about his desire to travel overseas to help our brave men and women as they courageously engage in combat.

It is heroes like Al who make our country great. He is a man of great integrity, revered